

Message Text

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SUBJECT: LIBERIA RECOGNIZES MPLA AS LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF
ANGOLA

REF: MONROVIA 1129

1. THERE FOLLOWS TEXT OF PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY FOREIGN MINISTER DENNIS AT 1800 HOURS GMT FEB 13 ANNOUNCING GOL RECOGNITION OF MPLA GOVERNMENT IN ANGOLA. QTE: THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA, IN CONSONANCE WITH ITS TRADITIONAL ADHERENCE TO, AND RESPECT FOR, THE CHARTER OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY, AND DECISIONS OF THE ORGANIZATION DULY ARRIVED AT BY THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS, THROUGH OVERT EXPRESSIONS OF THE MAJORITY OF MEMBER STATES, WISHES TO, ONCE MORE, STATE ITS POSITION ON ANGOLA IN ORDER TO AVOID ANY MISUNDERSTANDING OR MISINTERPRETATION OF THE STAND LIBERIA HAS MAINTAINED DURING THE UNFORTUNATE AND DISTRESSING FRATRICIDAL CONFLICT IN ANGOLA.

LIKE MANY OTHER AFRICAN STATES AND LONG BEFORE ANGOLA'S INDEPENDENCE LIBERIA HAD GIVEN SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE TO THE ANGOLAN LIBERATION STRUGGLE. AND CONSISTENT WITH ITS BELIEF THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY COMPOSED OF THE THREE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS (FNLA, MPLA AND UNITA), ALL THREE OF WHICH HAD BEEN DULY RECOGNIZED BY THE OAU, WOULD SERVE AS

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THE BASIS FOR PEACE, LIBERIA ENTERTAINED THE HOPE THAT THE

LIBERATION MOVEMENTS WOULD HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES AFFORDED THEM TO FORM A UNITED FRONT.

ACCORDINGLY, WHEN IN JULY 1974 THE THREE ANGOLAN MOVEMENTS MET IN BUKAVU, ZAIRE WITH THE HEADS OF STATE OF ZAIRE, TANZANIA, ZAMBIA, CONGO AND THE OAU SECRETARY GENERAL, PRESIDENT TOLBERT DISPATCHED MESSAGES OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT FOR THE EFFORTS AT FORMING A UNITED FRONT AS ANGOLA STOOD AT THE THRESHOLD OF INDEPENDENCE.

SIMILARLY, WHEN PRESIDENT KENYATTA WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN GETTING THE LEADERS OF THE THREE MOVEMENTS IN JANUARY 1975 TO ADOPT, IN THE MOMBASSA COMMUNIQUE, A COMMON PLATFORM FOR INDEPENDENCE NEGOTIATIONS WITH PORTUGAL, PRESIDENT TOLBERT TOOK THE OCCASION TO PLEAD WITH THE ANGOLAN LEADERS FOR UNITY.

AS TALKS GOT UNDERWAY IN PORTUGAL SUBSEQUENTLY LEADING TO THE ALVOR AGREEMENT AND THE FORMATION OF A TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR ANGOLA, PRESIDENT TOLBERT AGAIN APPEALED FOR COOPERATION, TOLERANCE AND UNITY AMONG THE THREE MOVEMENTS. AND SO DID HE WHEN AN ESCALATION OF HOSTILITIES IN ANGOLA NECESSITATED THE NAKURU MEETING AND THE SUBSEQUENT AGREEMENT BY THE MOVEMENTS TO END THE FIGHTING, CONCILIATE AND UNITE.

THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD OF THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT AND SINCE THE NOVEMBER 11TH INDEPENDENCE OF ANGOLA, LIBERIA HAS, CONSISTENT WITH THE OAU'S POSITION, SUPPORTED ALL EFFORTS AT PEACE, UNITY AND RECONCILIATION AMONG THE CONTENDING POLITICAL FACTIONS.

UNFORTUNATELY, THIS HAS NOT BEEN ACHIEVED. BECAUSE THE ATTEMPT AT UNITY HAD FAILED, TWO CONTENDING GOVERNMENTS EVOLVED; ONE OF THE MPLA AND THE OTHER OF THE FLNA/UNITA COALITION. IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE FACT THAT THE DECISION OF THE KAMPALA SUMMIT ON ANGOLA CALLED FOR A CEASE-FIRE BY THE THREE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FACT FINDING COMMISSION OF INQUIRY AND CONCILIATION, LIBERIA DID NOT FEEL THAT SHORT OF A DECISION BY THE OAU TO ALTER ITS POSITION OF CONCILIATION AND MEDIATION IN AN EFFORT TO ACHIEVE UNITY AMONG THE THREE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, SHE COULD IN GOOD CONSCIENCE RECOGNIZE ANY ONE OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS OF ANGOLA. LIBERIA DID NOT FEEL THAT SUCH AN ACT WOULD AID THE SEARCH FOR A LASTING PEACE AND UNITY IN THAT SISTER AFRICAN COUNTRY. HER OBJECTIVE AND PERSISTENT EFFORTS WERE THEREFORE DIRECTED TOWARD INITIATIVES THAT WOULD LEAD TO A CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES, WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FOREIGN FORCES, MILITARY AND PARA-MILITARY - THEREBY UNCLASSIFIED

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ALLOWING THE PEOPLE OF ANGOLA TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR HARD-WON INDEPENDENCE AND TO EVOLVE A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY. THE LIBERIAN GOVERNMENT'S POSITION HAS ALWAYS BEEN CONSISTENT WITH AND SUPPORTIVE OF DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE OAU. THESE CONSIDERATIONS LED THE GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA TO RECOGNIZE THE LEGITIMACY OF THE THREE ANGOLAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS STRUGGLING FOR INDEPENDENCE AND TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH THEM. ON THE EVE OF ANGOLA'S INDEPENDENCE WHEN THE OAU COLLECTIVELY UNDERTOOK

INITIATIVES WITH A VIEW TO ENCOURAGING THE THREE MOVEMENTS TO
CLOSE RANKS AND FORM A UNITED FRONT,
LIBERIA WAS AGAIN UNSPARING IN HER SUPPORT AND COMPLETELY
IDENTIFIED WITH THESE EFFORTS.

BUT TODAY, A MAJORITY OF OAU MEMBER STATES, 30 OUT OF 46 IN
NUMBER, HAVING REACHED ANOTHER DECISION ON ANGOLA, AND ANGOLA
HAVING BEEN ADMITTED TO FULL MEMBERSHIP IN THE OAU IN KEEPING
WITH ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CURRENT CHAIRMAN, WHICH ANNOUNCEMENT
IS CONTAINED IN A CABLEGRAM FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY
GENERAL OF THE OAU TO THE GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA, LIBERIA EXTENDS
FULL RECONGITION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
ANGOLA HEADED BY PRESIDENT AGOSTHINO NETO.

IN TAKING THIS ACTION, IT IS THE EARNEST HOPE OF THE GOVERNMENT
OF LIBERIA THAT THIS ACT WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR HOSTILITIES
TO CEASE, AND AN ENDURING PEACE ESTABLISHED BY GENUINE RECONCIL-
IATION, THUS FACILITATING THE VERITABLE CONSOLIDATION OF THE
HARD-WON INDEPEDENCE IN ANGOLA. TOWARDS THIS END, THE
GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF LIBERIA REMAIN COMMITTED TO CONSISTENTLY
AND PERSISTENTLY AID IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE THIS OBJECT-
IVE, THEREBY OCCASIONING UNITY, PEACE AND PROSPERITY FOR THE PEOPLE
OF ANGOLA. UNQTE.

2. EMBASSY COMMENTS FOLLOW SEPTTEL. BEAN

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